



Supporting Children with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

Background:

Under the Christie administration, the Departments of Human Services (DHS) and Children and Families (DCF) established a Steering Committee to assess the provision of services to children with developmental disabilities whose needs were being met by multiple departments and divisions.

To advance this effort and to streamline care, Governor Chris Christie announced during his Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Address that the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) within DHS will transition its child services to DCF.

This realignment will result in a new, integrated system, which will provide a single point of entry for families to seek services. Underlying this change is the view that children with developmental disabilities and their families should be integrated with, not “carved out” of, the continuum that has been successfully established to serve the whole child and the whole family.

Integrated System of Care for Children with I/DD:

Beginning July 1, 2012, the Department of Children and Families will begin serving children with developmental disabilities that are in residential placements or receiving intensive in-home behavioral services. DHS and DCF will continue to work closely to review each child to ensure that there is continuity of care during the transition. Children and families should experience no difference in service delivery during this transition.

Effective January 1, 2013, DCF will assume responsibility for the Family Support Program, currently administered by DDD. DHS and DCF have begun to meet with stakeholder groups (Family Support Regional Planning Councils, Family Support Coalition, and others) to solicit input and feedback regarding how best to transition children to DCF and effective strategies to improve the service system.

When a child reaches age 16, DDD will begin to provide transitional planning assistance. During this time, (age 16 to 21) a child will be served dually by both systems, ensuring the opportunity for a meaningful and coordinated move into adult services. All direct services (residential, in-home, behavioral, family support, etc.) will continue to be provided by DCF **until age 21**. After age 21, the programs (family support, residential, day program, etc.) will be provided by DDD. This realignment will allow DDD to focus its core mission on serving adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Transition Planning and Stakeholder Input:

Throughout the transition and beyond, staff from DHS and DCF will be working collaboratively to facilitate a seamless transition and plan for the future. Stakeholders – individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, the provider community, advocates, and other state and local government representatives – will be key partners in this effort.

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide input and advocacy throughout this process. We need your help to ensure that the new system is designed to meet the needs of children with developmental disabilities and their families!